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ABSTRACT

A learning support system is described which consists of the following phases: (1) pre-decision--to gather information and make decisions about courses so that by the end of the phase a clear listing of courses is generated; this phase consists only of Staff and Maintenance functions; (2) pre-service--to make all arrangements necessary for the operation of courses so that by the end of the phase courses are set to begin; (3) in-service--to provide support and guidance to teachers and students such that courses will be successfully completed, teachers will improve their teaching, and students will articulate and meet their learning objectives; and (4) post-service--to gather information and make decisions such that students and teachers feel a sense of completion and planning can continue; all functions are carried out by staff as a whole. Roles and functions are described. (KM)

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Vermont Community College

LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEM

Northeast Kingdom Site
Box 423
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September, 1972

JC 730 243

CONTENTS

I. Introduction

In which the Reader is presented with a justification for what he is presently holding in hand and is given a first taste of the feast in store.

II. Pictures

These attempt to catch and eliminate the several thousand words which might otherwise emerge. They consist of an OVERVIEW which is then broken down in subsequent pages into five PHASES. Instructions for making sense of them are also included here.

III. Brief Explanations

These simply break down the contents of the pictures into a more readily useable format.

IV. Expansions and forms

Where certain functions require more detailed explanation they are keyed to the diagrams and expanded here. We have also included samples of all forms and checklists currently in use.

V. Roles

Each of the four sets of functions is taken separately here, christianed a "role" and described.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

NOV 9 1973

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this document is to clarify how the Northeast Kingdom Site plans, supports, and evaluates learning activities. A secondary purpose is to provide a model for consideration by other sites and other similar institutions.

For two reasons we believe it is of value to produce this document. First, we feel it is not sufficient simply to be a group of people who "make things work". It is also necessary to put down on paper what we do so that we can be clearer about where we are going, about how we can best get there, and about how we know when we have arrived. There is nothing sacred (or scarce) about paper. It is essential that what appears here be constantly open to re-examination and subject to change. Secondly, when new people appear on the job, this will provide them with guidelines to follow at least until they begin to develop their own procedures.

Ultimately, the learning support system should ensure that students learn and teachers teach in the best way possible. That is our prime objective. Initially it was thought that the best way to accomplish this was to think in terms of separate "teacher support" and "student support" systems. During the course of our work, however, it became apparent that we could not separate these quite so simply. The Northeast Kingdom is large. It was unreasonable to attempt to "cover" all regions with the same people.

Therefore, we chose to start with a broad "Learning Support System" and then defined within that all those things which had to be done ("functions") in order to support learning. Some of these required special professional skills and some did not. The former we called student support functions and teacher support functions. The latter, broken in two parts, are maintenance functions and staff functions. Briefly they are as follows:

SPECIAL SKILLS

Teacher Support: All tasks involving direct professional work with teachers aimed at helping them to teach better.

Student Support: All tasks involving counselling students to plan their learning activities and to overcome barriers to learning.

NOT PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Maintenance: All activities within a specific geographical area aimed at facilitating the "mechanical" operation of learning.

Staff: All activities emanating from the Site office. These range from secretarial tasks to planning decisions made by the staff as a whole.

Teacher support functions in the Northeast Kingdom are the responsibility of the Assistant Coordinator. Student support functions, while carried out by the full counselling staff, are the ultimate responsibility of the Chief Counselor. Maintenance functions are carried out by whoever is "in charge" of a particular geographic area regardless of other additional responsibilities. And Staff functions are shared among all staff.

II. PICTURES

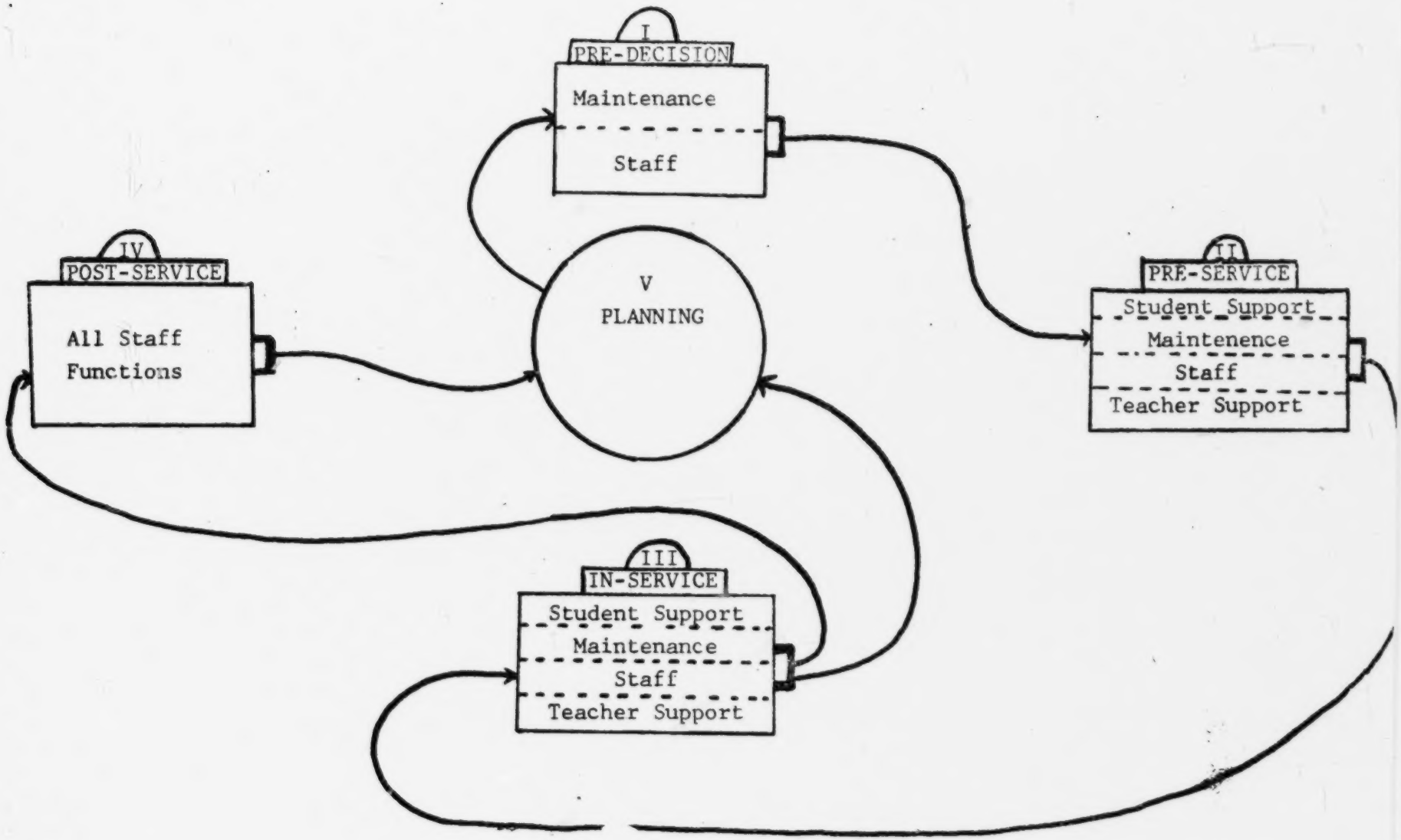
There are six pictures in all. They form the bones of the system.

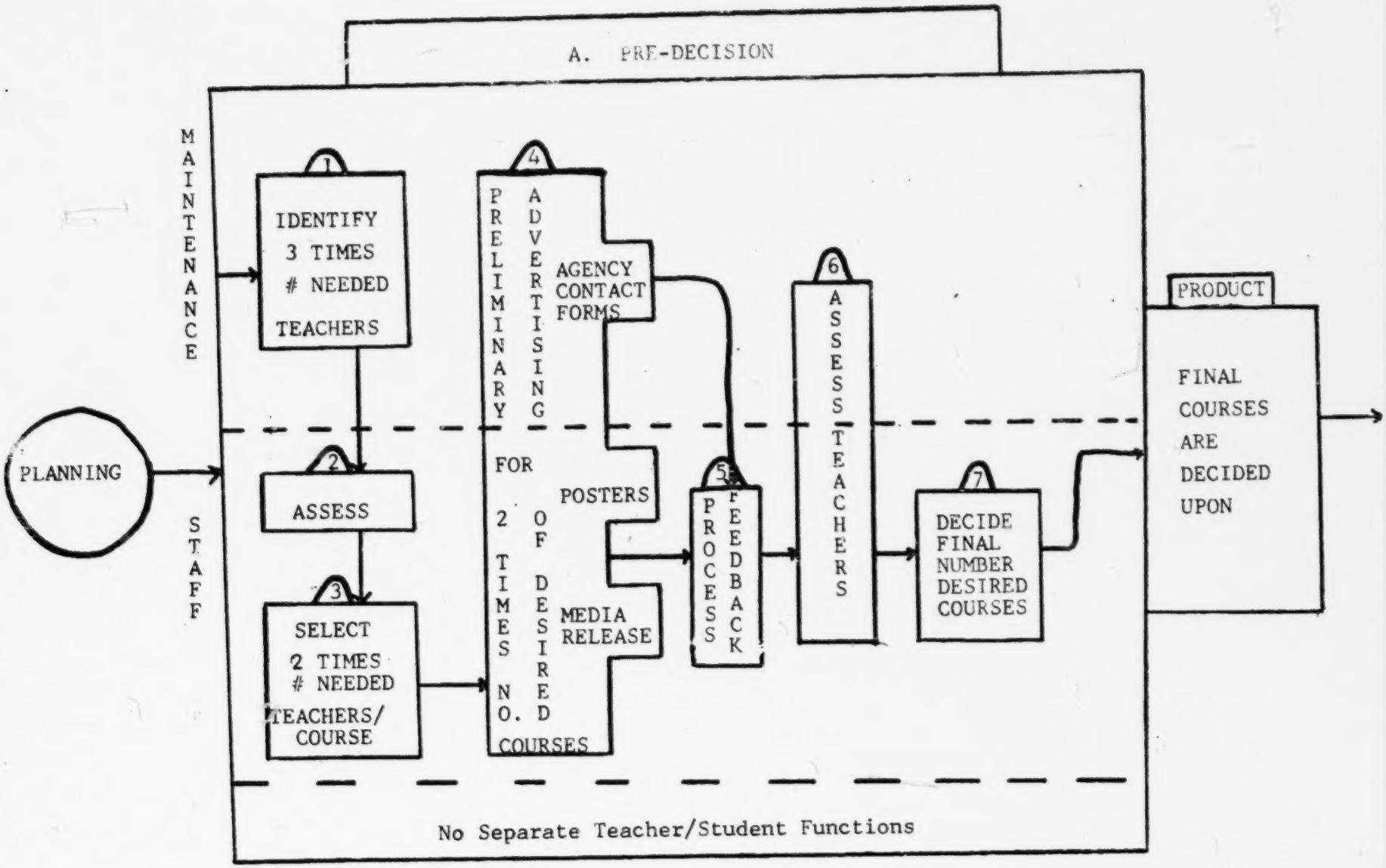
The OVERVIEW depicts the general cycle - from the "pre-decision" phase through "planning" and on to the next cycle. A cycle will generally last for one trimester although it need not be longer than several weeks. Each phase has a clearly specified "product" which, when completed, signals movement into the next phase. Some phases include jobs to be done by all four "roles" (Student Support, Maintenance, Staff, and Teacher Support) and some have only one or two.

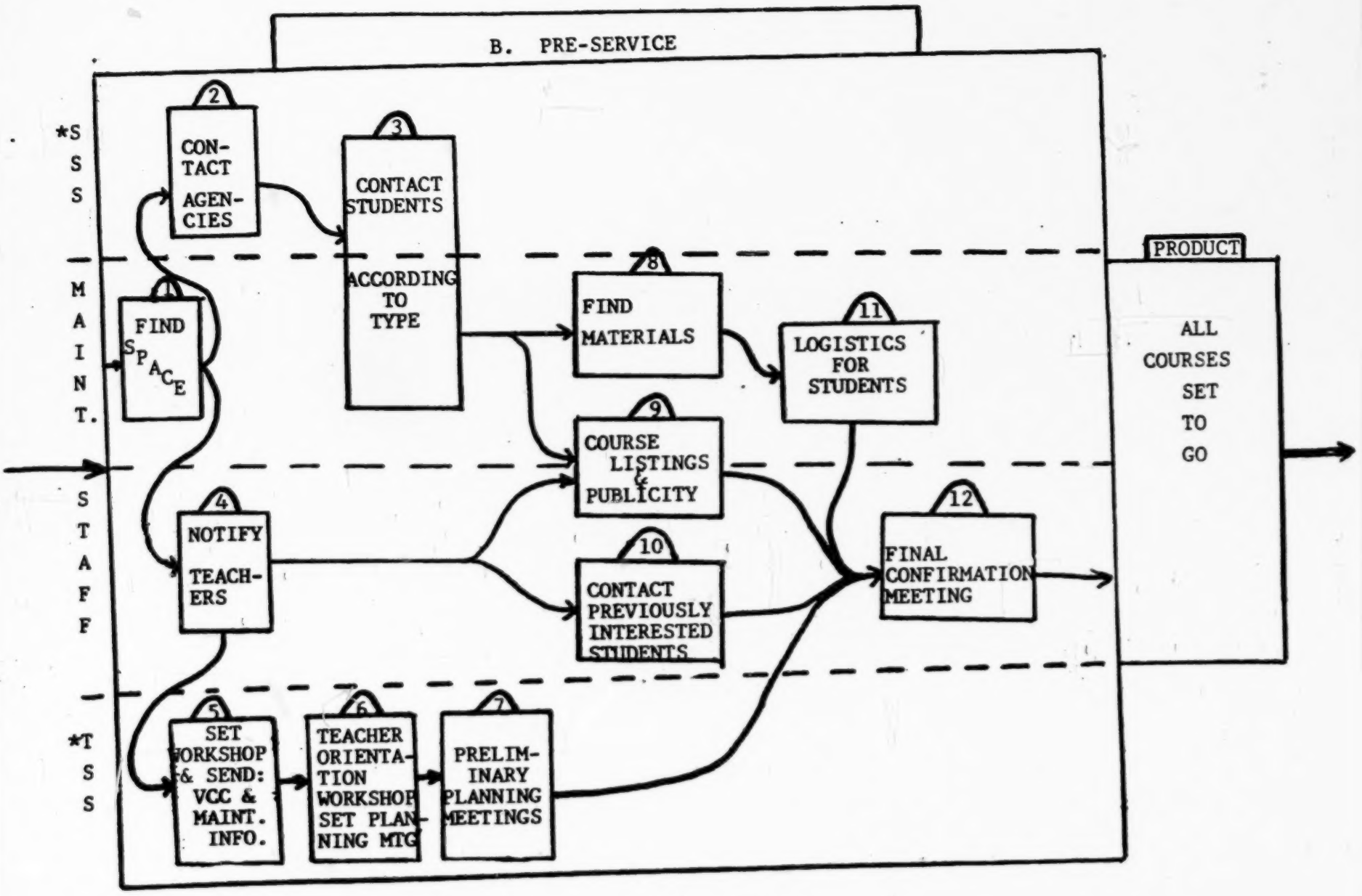
The other five pictures expand on each phase. Functions to be filled are written in the numbered boxes and read from left to right in sequence. People who do them (roles) are indicated by the horizontal dotted lines. Thus, in "Pre-service" (B) the maintanence person finds class space, helps contact students, finds materials, and arranges logistics. In the meantime, the Student Support person has been contacting agencies and students, the Teacher Support person has arranged for course planning and conducted workshops, and when all previous functions are filled, the staff meets as a whole to confirm that all systems are "go".

The "planning" phase begins during the previous trimester and culminates in a special planning period. Procedures remain to be worked out in detail.

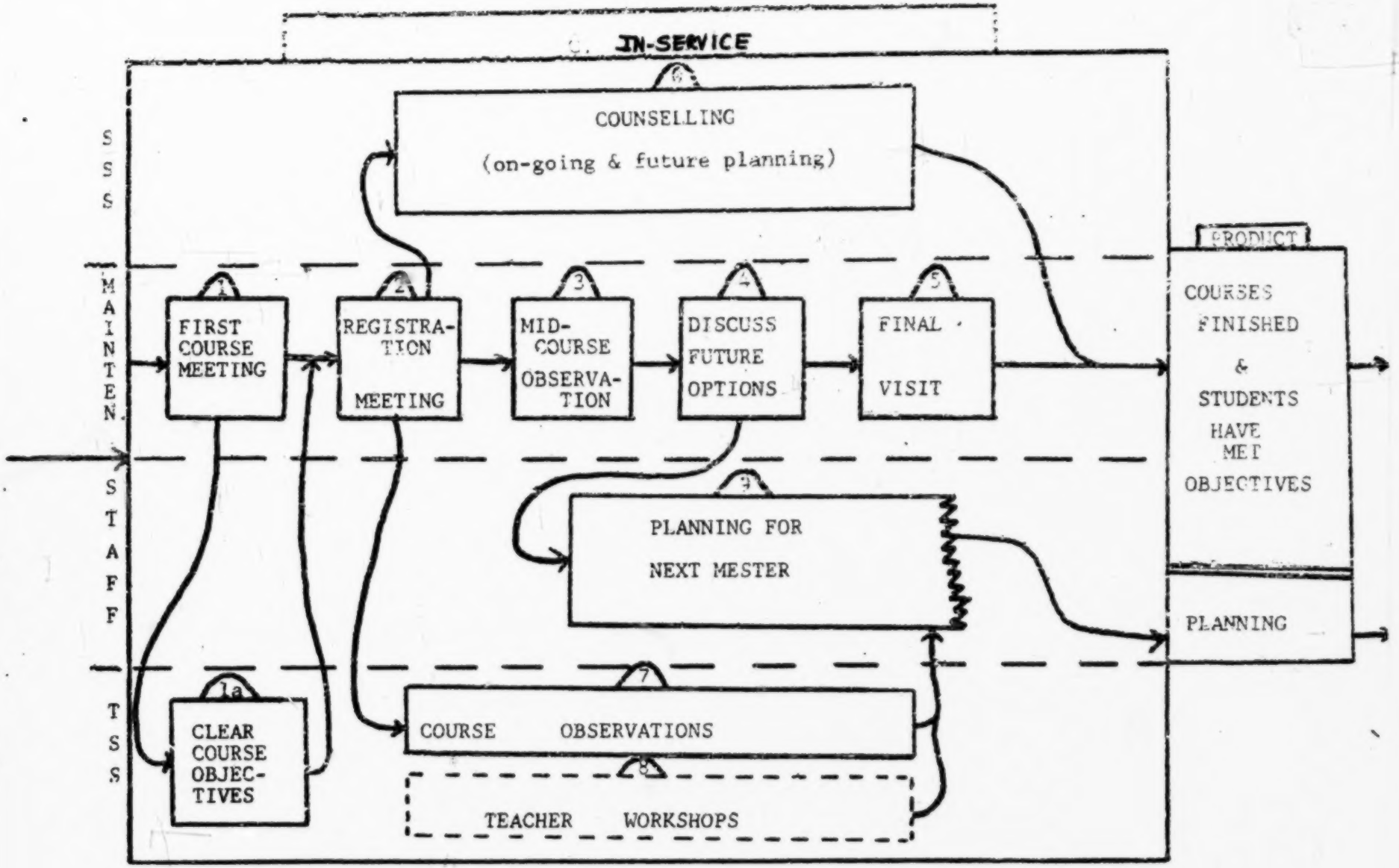
OVERVIEW

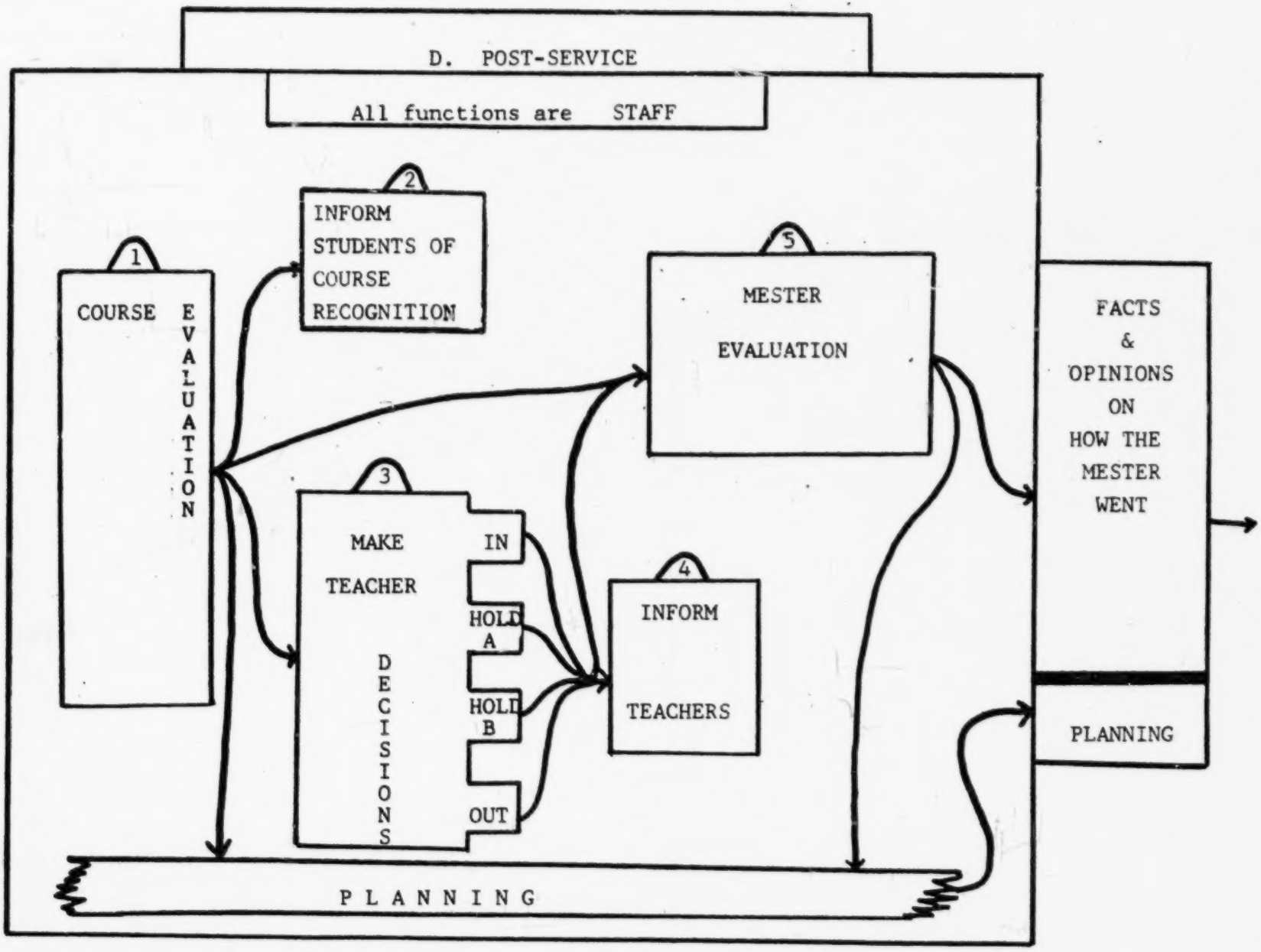

I
PRE-DECISION
Maintenance
Staff
II
PRE-SERVICE
Student Support
Maintenence
Staff
Teacher Support
III
IN-SERVICE
Student Support
Maintenance
Staff
Teacher Support
IV
POST-SERVICE
All Staff
Functions
V
PLANNING

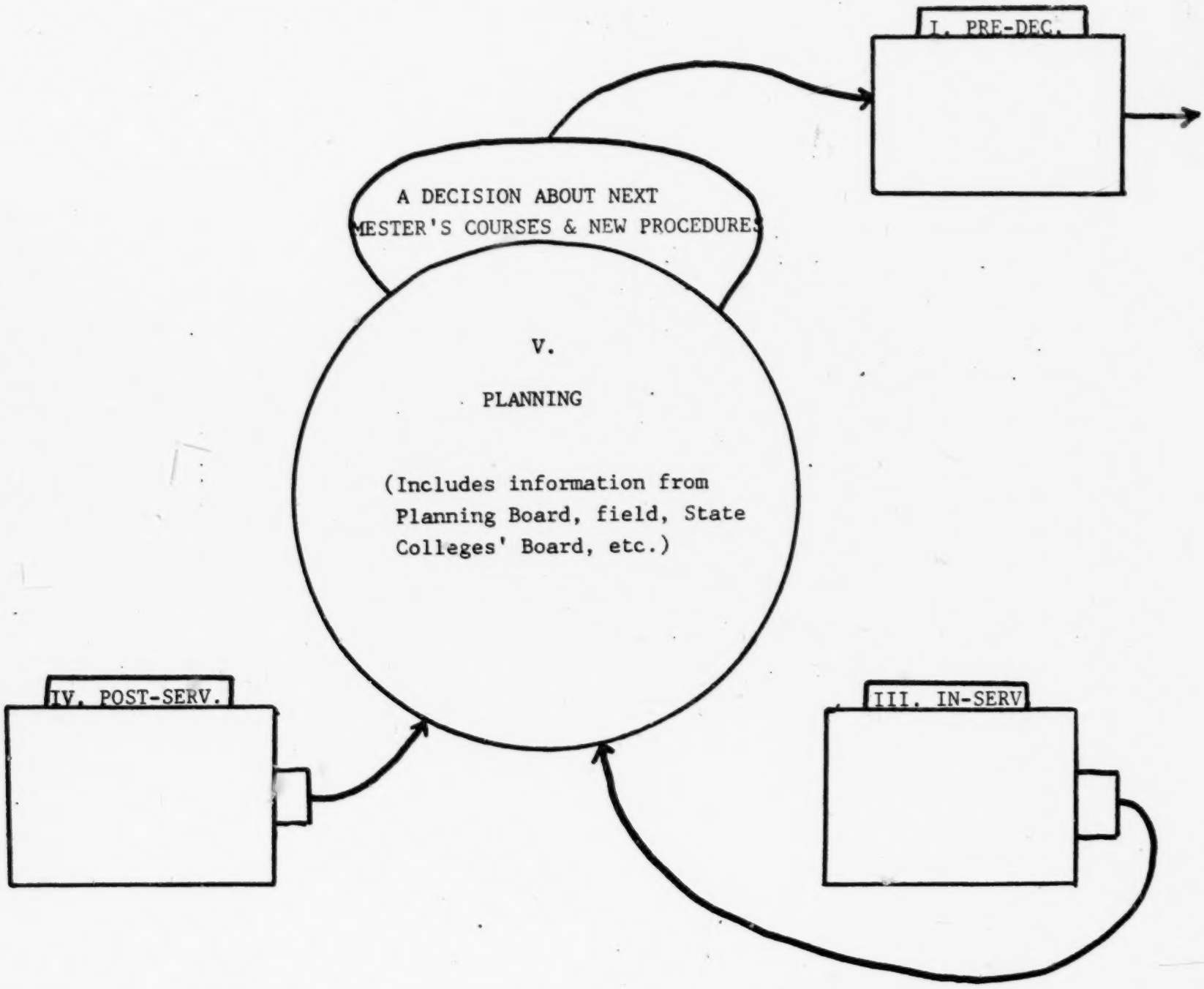

A. PRE-DECISION
MAINTENANCE
STAFF
PLANNING
1
IDENTIFY
3 TIMES
NEEDED
TEACHERS
2
ASSESS
3
SELECT
2 TIMES
NEEDED
TEACHERS/
COURSE
4
PRELIMINARY ADVERTISING
FOR
2 TIMES NO. OF DESIRED COURSES
AGENCY CONTACT FORMS
POSTERS
MEDIA RELEASE
5
PROCESS FEEDBACK
6
ASSESS TEACHERS
7
DECIDE
FINAL
NUMBER
DESIRED
COURSES
PRODUCT
FINAL
COURSES
ARE
DECIDED
UPON
No Separate Teacher/Student Functions



* SSS= STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEM; TSS= TEACHER SUPPORT SYSTEM


IN-SERVICE
SSS
MAINTEN.
STAFF
TSS
COUNSELLING
(on-going & future planning)
1
FIRST COURSE MEETING
2
REGISTRA-TION MEETING
3
MID-COURSE OBSERVA-TION
4
DISCUSS FUTURE OPTIONS
5
FINAL VISIT
PRODUCT
COURSES FINISHED & STUDENTS HAVE MET OBJECTIVES
PLANNING FOR NEXT MESTER
PLANNING
1a
CLEAR COURSE OBJEC-TIVES
7
COURSE OBSERVATIONS
8
TEACHER WORKSHOPS


D. POST-SERVICE
All functions are STAFF
1
COURSE EVALUATION
2
INFORM STUDENTS OF COURSE RECOGNITION
3
MAKE TEACHER DECISIONS
IN
HOLD A
HOLD B
OUT
4
INFORM TEACHERS
5
MESTER EVALUATION
FACTS & OPINIONS ON HOW THE MESTER WENT
PLANNING
PLANNING


I. PRE-DEC.
A DECISION ABOUT NEXT
MESTER'S COURSES & NEW PROCEDURES
V.
PLANNING
(Includes information from
Planning Board, field, State
Colleges' Board, etc.)
IV. POST-SERV.
III. IN-SERV

III. BRIEF EXPLANATIONS

In this section, each function of each phase is described in brief form and keyed by number to the pictures. Where a more lenghty description is necessary, the reader is referred to part IV of this report.

The format is intended to clarify the objective of each phase, the means for accomplishing the objective, and who is responsible for doing it.

A. PRE-DECISION

OBJECTIVE: To gather information and make decisions about courses so that by the end of the phase a clear listing of courses for the upcoming mester is generated.

This phase consists only of Staff and Maintenance functions.

	Function	What Happens	Role	Expansion
1)	Identify 3X Teachers	On the basis of learning needs assessment and recommendations from the Planning Board, three times the number of teachers as needed are identified in each area.	Maintenance	———
2)	Assess Teachers	Preliminary information on teachers is gathered according to geographical and personal considerations.	Staff	———
3)	Identify 2X Teachers	Twice the needed number of teachers are selected on the above information. A list is drawn up.	Staff	———
4)	Preliminary Advertising	Twice the expected number of courses are publicised by name and location. Means include: -Agency Contact Forms -Posters with Return Cards -Media Releases	Maintenance Staff Staff	———
5)	Process Feedback	Information on course preferences is gathered and organized as it comes in.	Staff	———
6)	Assess Teachers	Teachers are assessed for final selection and notification in terms of student interest expressed in (5) above and on the basis of interviews.	Staff & Maintenance	A_6
7)	Decide Final Courses	On the basis of all the above information, final decision is made on courses, locations, and teachers. List is drawn up.	Staff	A_7

B. PRE-SERVICE

OBJECTIVE: To make all arrangements necessary for the operation of courses so that by the end of the phase courses are set to begin.

	Function	What Happens	Role	Expansion
1)	Find Space	Facilities and locations are arranged for each course.	Maintenance	———
2)	Contact Agencies	Where students have been referred by an agency, these are contacted to clarify and fend off problems which may arise.	S.S.S.	B_2
3)	Contact Students According to Type	Where possible, students are contacted personally to inform them about the course(s) and to begin the educational counselling process.	S.S.S. & Maintenance	B_3
4)	Notify Teachers	Office manager phones or writes teachers to inform them of decision to run or not to run the course and that the TSS person will meet with them shortly.	Staff	———
5)	Set Teacher Workshops and Send Out Information	Teacher orientation workshops are planned and teachers are informed. Basic orientation about VCC and NEK Site procedures are sent to teachers.	T.S.S.	———
6)	Teacher Orientation Workshops	Workshops are held. At workshops, individual planning meetings with teachers are arranged.	T.S.S.	B_6
7)	Preliminary Planning Meetings	TSS person meets with each teacher individually to help in basic course planning and to provide essential VCC information.	T.S.S.	B_7
8)	Find Materials	Where possible, required course materials are located in conjunction with the teacher. TSS person refers requests to MAINTENANCE.	Maintenance	———

	Function	What Happens	Role	Expansion
9)	Course Listings and Publicity	Final courses are publicised through mailings, newspapers, radio, T.V., posters, agencies etc.	Maintenance & Staff	———
10)	Contact Previously Interested Students	Students who are on file as having expressed interest in particular areas are reached by phone and mail.	Staff	———
11)	Logistics for Students	Where necessary and possible, arrangements are made to put students in contact with transportation, baby-sitting, etc.	Maintenance	———
12)	Final Confirmation Meeting	Entire staff meets to confirm that everything is ready to begin. Last minute problems are discussed.	Staff	———

C. IN-SERVICE

OBJECTIVES: To provide support and guidance to teachers and students such that courses will be successfully completed, teachers will improve their teaching and students will articulate and meet their learning objectives.

	Function	What Happens	Role	Expansion
1)	First Course Meeting	Maintenance person visits first class to distribute orientation material, to assist in objective-setting, and to gather an assortment of useful information.	Maintenance	C_1
1a)	Clear Course Objectives	On the basis of the first class, objectives are gathered by the maintenance person and written up in complete form. The TSS person clears them.	Maintenance & T.S.S.	C_1
2)	Registration Meeting	Generally takes place on the second or third class. Student information forms are distributed and filled out, general student problems are aired, and completed course objectives (1a) are handed back to students.	Maintenance	C_2
3)	Mid-course Observation	Takes place on 5th to 7th class. Includes a check on progress toward objectives and teacher/student problems. Special problems are referred to TSS or SSS people.	Maintenance	C_3
4)	Discuss Future Options	Takes place on 7th to 10th class and may be combined with Mid-course Observations (3). Students are stimulated to consider future learning opportunities; course completion forms are handed out.	Maintenance	C_4
5)	Final Visit	Occurs generally at the last meeting. Information regarding student/teacher performance and problems is gathered, new course information is distributed, and general de-briefing is completed.	Maintenance	C_5

	Functions	What Happens	Role	Expansion
6)	Counselling	This involves all of the "in-service" support functions detailed in the expansion (IV) and discussion of roles (V).	S.S.S.	C_6
7)	Course Observations	This involves all the the "in-service" support functions detailed in the expansion (IV) and discussion of roles (V).	T.S.S.	C_7
8)	Teacher Workshops	These are optional as needs arise. May be anything from specific training sessions to pot-luck dinners for sharing ideas.	T.S.S.	C_8
9)	Planning for Next Mester	Planning begins at some point during previous mester. Details of procedures remain for elaboration.	Staff	———

D. POST-SERVICE

OBJECTIVE: To gather information and make decisions such that students and teachers feel a sense of completion and planning for next mester can continue.

All functions are carried out by staff as a whole.

	Functions	What Happens	Role	Expansion
1)	Course Evaluation	Staff collaborates to decide on overall effectiveness of each course. Decisions include course recognition, disposition of teachers, and recommended changes.	Staff	D_1
2)	Inform Students of Course Recognition	Contingent on decisions regarding "credit" guidelines, students are sent official forms of recognition.	Staff	———
3)	Make Teacher Decisions	On the basis of course evaluation information the staff decides on future of teachers. Broadly, the options are: IN-Teacher is retained for next mester HOLD A-Teacher is desirable but not needed for next mester HOLD B-Teacher has potential but needs time for growth and/or further training OUT-Teacher is not asked to teach again	Staff	———
4)	Inform Teachers	Teacher is informed of decision in (3) above and TSS person makes available whatever feedback seems helpful.	Staff & T.S.S.	———
5)	Mester Evaluation	This involves full evaluation of all learning support activities of the mester. This information is fed into planning for the next mester.	Staff	D_5
6)	Planning	Deliberate planning activities are carried out throughout this phase.	Staff	———

IV. EXPANSIONS

A number of the procedures on the preceding pages are elaborated here. Where appropriate we have also included checklists and forms. It is intended that this section be continuously revised and augmented as procedures are developed.

A_6

ASSESS TEACHERS

The purpose of this activity is to gather information about teachers in such a way that it is useful in deciding whom to select (A_7).

By this point, the list of prospective teachers has been boiled down to about two for each course. The best means of gathering information in this case is a simple interview. The problem of the interview is "what information do we need which will allow us to predict if this person will be an outstanding teacher?" Secondly, "how do we get that information?"

To begin with, the interview must communicate information in both ways. It may be that the interviewee simply does not know enough about VCC to know if he wants to teach.

He needs this information:

- the nature, philosophy, goals, etc. of VCC
- the expectations of VCC support staff regarding behavioral objectives, in-process evaluation, joint objective planning, student evaluation procedures, etc.
- the extent and limitations of VCC resources

We need this information:

- the area and extent of knowledge and/or competence in his "subject" field
- his past history of work/study in the area
- past history (if any) of teaching experience
- attitudes toward: students
  self-evaluation and continuous learning
  new ideas
  specific objective-setting
  having teaching evaluated
  general VCC philosophy

We assume that we already know his extent of commitment of time, where he lives, whether he has transportation, etc. If not, these specifics must also be gathered.

Once gathered, all this information, including a general statement by the interviewing staff member, is placed in the teacher's file and is used in the next stage.

DECIDE FINAL COURSES

Decisions regarding final courses are made in a joint staff meeting.

A number of factors are taken into account here. They include:

- Demand for the course
- Availability of teachers
- Quality of teachers
- Fit with total site priorities

One important factor is the quality of teachers. It is necessary to be as clear as possible in defining what we mean by "quality" and how we know when we see it. Ultimately, the decision is in the hands of the people making it. However, we offer the following criteria in order to be at least somewhat objective about why we make the choices we do.

We specify two types of criteria: "musts" and "shoulds". Thus, a person who does not meet the "must" is screened out at once. The remainder are measured against the "shoulds".

- must possess competence in "subject" area*
- there must be a demand for the learning experience

- should be willing to involve students in course planning
- should demonstrate openness to change and willingness to learn about teaching/learning
- should be willing to plan course carefully, using behavioral objectives when appropriate
- should be willing to undertake continuous evaluation from students, self, and VCC staff
- should be willing to relate teaching to community realities and to make it relevant to students' lives when possible
- should not have major problems in own relationship to community

When decisions are made, it is important that those teachers who were NOT selected be informed in such a way that they do not feel rejected. Unless there are clear reasons why their services would never be desired, their names are placed on file as future resources.

* evaluation of this is clearly difficult. But extent of work experience, amount of training, quality of "products" are all acceptable evidence of competence. It is critical only that we know why we think someone is competent and can prove it.

B_2

CONTACT AGENCIES

Contacting the parent agency of one of our students before classes begin serves at least three functions that promote the chances of good student support. First, it allows VCC counseling staff to work with the agency and identify potential problems that the student might have with his particular class. (This pre-supposes that the agency has or is willing to share this kind of information.) Second, VCC and the agency can use this time to set up a contract or set of procedures to follow for each class, so that each person involved knows exactly what he needs to do. For example, if a WIN person is not allowed to miss more than two classes, then responsibility for taking attendance, notifying DES, and talking to the student must be assumed by one of the two agencies. Other areas that may be included in the contract are, who does any counseling necessary, what does the parent agency need to know about the student's progress in the course, etc.

And third, once the first two functions have been done, the counseling staff has some information to help decide whether or not the student needs a personal visit before the class begins, or whether the support received by all the students during the class will be sufficient.

PRELIMINARY PLANNING MEETING

This meeting takes place between the TSS person and each teacher on an individual basis approximately 1-2 weeks before the course is to begin. It has three basic purposes.

Clarification of VCC policies and expectations

-- General explanation and question/answer on VCC purposes, form, philosophy, and policies regarding "credit" and the degree.

-- Explanation of the evaluation procedures

- In-process evaluation and mid-course correction
- Solicitation and use of student feedback
- Final evaluation procedures

-- Roles of VCC staff

- Site coordinator
- TSS person as professional guide and helper
- Maintenance person for administrative/housekeeping matters and communication
- SSS person as helper in student problems

Planning of course objectives, methods, and evaluation

This is the core of the meeting. How it is conducted varies with personality of the TSS person. However, our present procedure is as follows:

- Teacher and TSS person together go over the teacher information form which has been mailed out previously. (See next page).

- The major part of the form includes a format for planning course objectives, methods, and evaluation procedures. They work together to make this as clear and specific as reasonable given the nature of the course, the students, and the teacher.

- It is explained that the product of this discussion will then be presented to students for modification at the first meeting. This will then be written up on final form by a staff person and returned to the class at the Registration meeting (C_2). Cleared through TSS person.

- It should also be emphasized at this time that an effective teacher makes an effort to know why students are taking the course, what special problems they have, and as much as possible about them to enable him/her to individualize instruction.

Vermont Community College

Northeast Kingdom Site

COURSE DESCRIPTION

I. Course Title: _____

II. Program Relation: (To be filled out by VCC staff) _____

III. Course Description: (Brief statement of what course covers) _____

IV. Instructor: (Qualifications to teach course) _____

V. Meeting Schedule:
Dates: _____
Time: _____
Place: _____

VI. Required special materials, tools, and texts (if any):

VII. At which classes will there be formal, in-process feedback to the student concerning his performance?

VIII. At which class will there be an in-process re-evaluation of course objectives?

Clearing up administrative details

The following matters should be clarified:

- attendance must be kept for follow-up by SSS person
- necessary materials are gathered through mutual cooperation of teacher, students, and the maintenance person
- forms are kept at an absolute minimum but these are required:
  1. Student interest form
  2. Student information form
  3. Student feedback form
  4. Final evaluation information
- time and place of first course meeting if known. If not set at time of planning meeting, Maintenance person will contact teacher to do so.

POTENTIAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT ORIENTATION

(presented by maintenance person)

1. Who am I? (The maintenance person)
   When will I be back and Why?
   What do I do?
   Who are other staff?

2. What are we? Student Oriented
   a. Non-traditional - 5th State College
      1. Objectives
         Attendance
         Own Design
         Exit Skills
      2. Age of Student
      3. Nights
      4. Past Experience
      5. No Campus
      6. No Failure
   b. No Access Student
      1. Not necessarily low income-open access
      2. Internal logistical maintenance
      3. Provide testing and tutorial service for those who need it.

3. Where are we? NEK
   a. Offices - phones - hours
   b. Full course list

4. How much do we cost?
   a. Grant conditions as applied to materials, etc.
   b. At present, costs nothing, teachers volunteer
   c. Eventual tuition - pay teachers
   d. Scholarships - sliding scale

5. Can we give college credit?
   a. Credit vs. competencies
   b. translation

6. How does above relate to AA degree?
   a. 2 years (½ of 4 year degree)
   b. 15 competencies over 3 areas
   c. few programs now - will expand
   d. SAC
   e. 5 stages - who to talk to if more is needed

7. What does staff do?
   a. TSS
   b. SSS
      1. AA degree
      2. helping students identify goals and work toward them
      3. set up independent studies
      4. logistics
      5. financial aid - being resource person
   c. Coordinator - secretary

VIEW YOUR CLASS AS A MUTUAL JOURNEY

COURSE OBJECTIVES	METHODS	EVALUATION
Where do I want to go? (What do I want my students to know at the end of the course?)	How do I plan to get there? (What techniques will I use to facilitate items in the first column?)	How shall I know when I'm there? (What behaviors/activities will show me that learning has occurred?)

8. How do I go about setting course objectives and individual objectives?
   a. If never done it--might want to watch and use knowledge to do it next time
   b. Negotiations
   c. Anything above course objectives can be contracted with teacher as individual objectives.

C_1

FIRST COURSE MEETING

Unless it proves impossible, a staff person (usually the regional maintenance person) will attend the first meeting of every course.

The maintenance person (M) must accomplish a number of things at this meeting.

Student Orientation

- Presenting basic information about VCC through distribution of the Community College Bulletin, a brief talk, questions and answers.
- Clarification of the role of VCC staff, re. student and teacher counselling.
- Clarification of the processes of mutual objective-setting, mid-course correction of objectives, and evaluation procedures. This should also include explanation of the difference between individual and course objectives.
- Clarification of VCC "credit" policy and degree procedures.

Objectives

The teacher presents his/her prepared course objectives to the class and engages them in discussion, soliciting additions or changes. The results of this discussion are gathered by M who alone or in consultation with other staff people writes them up for distribution at the Registration Meeting (C_2).

Materials

Although problems associated with course materials should have been raised previously, M is responsible for checking to see if these have been provided or arranged.

Communication

M must insure that channels of communication are clear.

Student/Teacher:	Clarify use of in-process feedback
	Emphasize student responsibility for evaluating own learning
Student/ Staff:	Set up times and means for individual consultation if desired
	Distributing and gathering Student Information Forms.

REGISTRATION MEETING

This occurs during the second or third meeting of each course. It has several purposes.

Gathering information on students

- The Student Information Form is distributed and completed in class to be gathered at the end.
- A list of students who came previously but are not present is obtained.

Check on teacher problems

Either before or after class, M checks with teacher to see that things are going satisfactorily and to make appropriate arrangements if there are problems.

Check on student problems

While SIF is being filled out, M moves around to students to help in filling out the form and asking if there are any particular problems with the course arrangements so far. Where there are, M makes arrangements to deal with them.

The general outcome of this visit should be that the necessary information is gathered and that both students and teacher feel they are being well "cared for".

Teacher/Staff: Care of "housekeeping" items:
Attendance records
Names of new students
Miscellaneous problems

This appears to be a great deal of material. Thus, all care should be taken to concentrate the information as much as possible. The core of the first meeting should lie with discussion of the course objectives and content. Insofar as possible, the other matters should be separated from the teacher's presentation.

MID-COURSE OBSERVATION

This takes place roughly at the mid-point of each course, usually during the 5th to 7th week. There are three prime purposes.

In-process evaluation

This is the "mid-course-correction". The teacher and the class are aked to address these questions:

What were your course and/or individual objectives?

How do you feel about your progress toward them?
Will you be able to accomplish them by the end of the course?
If not, why? What do you plan to do about it?

Have your objectives changed?
If so, what are they now?
If not, do you want to change them?

Do you wish to talk to a staff person about them?

If a significant portion of the class wishes to change objectives, this can be done at this session. Those who want to retain the old objectives may do so on an individual basis. If the class choses to retain the original objectives, those who want to change may do so individually in consultation with the teacher and/or the staff person. The important thing is that students feel they are making real progress in their own terms.

Check on student problems

As in previous staff visits, M should make an effort to see students individually to see if there are particular problems. Where appropriate, times for further consultation can be arrange

Check on teacher problems

The same checking procedure is used with teachers as previously in order to confront special teaching or housekeeping problems. Where the teacher's problems are "professional" (concerning teaching methods, etc.), M should refer the problem to the TSS person for detailed help. Such problems might be detected by the teacher's own report, by student report, or by M's own observation. In such matters, M might take the opportunity to ask the teacher specifically if he/she would like the TSS person to visit.

The general outcome of this visit should be that students and teachers are satisfied that learning progress is taking place and that the class and individual students know where they are going. They should also feel that they are receiving support as needed from the VCC staff.

C_4

DISCUSS FUTURE OPTIONS

This may occur at the "mid-course" meeting (C_3) or at a meeting several weeks before the course is to finish. Three purposes should be met.

Getting student feedback

Through questions and discussion, students are encouraged to offer their criticisms of, problems with, and ideas for VCC. Although they will have the opportunity to react on paper at a later time, this provides a more open-ended chance for us to hear new ideas and proposals for courses.

Considering the future

Students are encouraged to consider where they want to go after this course. VCC degree procedures and policy are explained. After a question and answer session, the Maintenance person takes names of those who wish to pursue the matter further and arrangements are made for meetings with an SSS staff member.

In addition to consideration of the degree programs, students are informed of current course possibilities for the next mester.

Administrative

Course completion forms are given to the teacher.

FINAL COURSE VISIT

Whenever possible, this will take place on the last meeting of the course. It is aimed at wrapping up administrative details and at giving students and teacher a sense of completion.

Administrative

-- Student feedback forms are distributed, explained, filled out, and returned.

-- Tentative new course listings for the region are distributed.

-- A list of regular students not present is compiled to receive feedback forms by mail.

-- Teacher fills out "course completion form" listing all students in the course as to whether they completed the course successfully or not.

General debriefing

A few moments are taken to answer any general questions students may have regarding such topics as "credit" transferrability, future learning opportunities, etc. "A brief word of thanks" to the students and teacher could be helpful in imparting a sense of completion.

At an appropriate time (perhaps after class), the Maintenance person meets with the teacher to discuss the teacher's feelings about the course, the students, VCC, the future, and anything else that is helpful.

COURSE OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of course observation by the TSS person is to enable teachers to become more aware of the results of their actions so that given continuing classes, the learning of students will improve.

The TSS person spends much of his/her time as a "maintenance" person in a particular region. He/she also plays an important role in helping teachers to plan their courses. These functions are outlined elsewhere. The purpose here involves a responsibility to improve teaching as well. Visits for this specific purpose occur either when the TSS person determines that a teacher needs/wants help, or when another person (staff, students, teachers) refers TSS to the teacher.

Although ideas about what makes for good teaching and how to help produce good learning both from teachers and students will vary with different TSS people, here are some thoughts which might be helpful.

Good teaching is more likely to occur when:

- teachers show genuine, emotional concern and respect for students
- teachers view themselves and students as growing, active people
- teachers view knowledge as more often created than merely transmitted
- teachers attempt to individualize instruction where appropriate
- teachers articulate and plan courses carefully
- teachers involve students in planning of objectives
- teachers regularly evaluate progress toward objectives and exhibit readiness to change when necessary
- teachers use methods appropriate to objectives

In theory, selection of teachers will have attempted to favor those who approach these styles. In practice, however, this may not always be true, or even desirable. Furthermore, no teacher is perfect.

In working with teachers, a useful objective is:

> HELPING TEACHERS SHOULD ENABLE THEM TO IMPROVE THEIR TEACHING, EVEN WHEN THE HELPER IS NOT PRESENT.
>
> This suggests that simply visiting a class and "telling a teacher what is wrong" is not sufficient. Rather, help should be aimed at providing the teacher with another set of eyes, giving feedback about what the helper saw happening in such a way that the teacher can accept the information and devise ways of using it to improve his teaching. Help may also involve suggesting new methods, but this should be done

with care--advice is most helpful when requested.

In the context of VCC teacher help, a key decision must be made: should TSS person spend a little time with many teachers or much with a few? The answer will depend on too many factors to mention here. Until the TSS person has acquired considerable experience in helping, however, it might be useful to concentrate on helping at least one teacher over a period of time simply to practice helping teachers. Here is a suggested approach:

Initial visit

This is likely to occur in the course of TSS's normal "maintenance" work. It is essential that the TSS have consent of the teacher to be in the classroom. At best, the teacher has invited TSS specifically to help his/her teaching. TSS should encourage teachers to request help of this sort.

During this visit, TSS makes an initial diagnosis. This provides a general overview of the teacher's style and the learning atmosphere. If there appear to be no large areas of concern, TSS may concentrate on other teachers; if the problems seem minor, perhaps a word or two will do it; if the problems are more severe, however, TSS should talk with the teacher to determine whether help is wanted in any area. If so, arrangements can be made for another meeting. If not, TSS must use his/her own sensitivity to determine how to proceed.

Planning period

The purpose of this slot is to enable TSS and the teacher to reach agreement on what will happen in the next class. It is vital that the TSS help teacher to evaluate his/her own success in terms of his/her own objectives. This is distinctly different from coming in and telling the teacher what's going wrong. For this reason, both must agree on the desired objectives of a class. A helpful question is: "what do you want the students to walk out of this session having learned?"

Planning may happen in a general sense as soon as teacher invites TSS person to the next class. This is a good time to decide on how teacher wants to have observation occur--look for special weaknesses? general observation? sit in back of class? introduce to students? While these questions are important, it is critical that both reach broad agreement on the objectives of the next class. Then, TSS should arrange to meet (say) a half hour before the next class for a "rehersal". At this point, TSS simply helps teacher "walk through" his class, anticipating what may or should occur. While at this time, objectives should be quite clear and specific, it is important not to throw in major wrenches but rather to shore up teacher's confidence. "Alright, try that--and watch to see what happens" is a good encouragement.

The Class

The chief purpose here is to gather information on what is happening. "What to look for" will be determined in large part by knowing what the teacher's objectives are. This is why a "planning session" or at least a brief discussion with teacher is of value before class. Frequently, teacher may ask for observation of particular areas.

One can take notes on "what's happening" in several forms. Some observers note "good/bad" or "strong/weak" points. Others preselect "things to watch for" in advance and make appropriate comments. Still others prefer to take as full a record of what happens (what is not said or done as well as what is) and then subject the "data" to fuller analysis after class and before the conference.

This last approach is probably the best from a "pure" teacher-training standpoint. However, since the time for full post-class analysis is generally not available, it may be necessary to mix value judgements with empirical observations. That is, comments on major issues may be combined with a description of the action. Thus, notes might look like this:

BEHAVIOR	COMMENT
T: This is the crankshaft. (points) Harry, did you find it? H: Yeah, this thing? T: Right. Everyone find it? S's: (nods all around)	Use of feedback

This way, two important things get accomplished. Behovioral information is detailed so the evidence is stated, and key issues (use of feedback) are identified so that it is easy to isolate patterns to bring to teacher's attention. The value of gathering and recording objective data during class cannot be over-emphasized. Insofar as possible the helper should present data to teacher which teacher can use to make his own evaluation in terms of his objectives. This helps both to reduce dependence on TSS and also to lower teacher's fear of "being judged."

After Class

It is usually desireable to take a few moments before talking with teacher to organize your own thoughts. This should include both deciding what to mention to the teacher and how to do it. This is a complex matter and there is little room here for elaboration. However, a good rule is: keep it simple (don't try to raise too many problems) and be gentle. During the conference it is especially important to keep teacher's focus on his own performance. Beware falling to the telling role. After the conference, TSS does well to examine how he/she might have run the whole conference more

effectively.

For someone who wishes to go more deeply into the complexity of helping teachers, an excellent book is: Clinical Supervision, Goldhammer, Holt, 1969.

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

The word "workshop" as used here should be read to mean any activity for teachers designed to increase their teaching competence. These may range from formal instructional situations directed toward developing specific skills to informal gatherings and "pot-luck" suppers. They are optional but do represent an effective way to help teachers in particular areas. Moreover, they can provide teachers and students with invaluable opportunities to come together in non-classroom activities.

In general, workshops should be organized around teacher needs. Some general categories might include:

Orientation (see B_6 for example)
Learning styles of non-traditional students
Techniques of evaluation
Alternative teaching methods and techniques
Specific problem-solving sessions
Informal social gatherings

Frequently, students are a helpful addition to workshops and can serve to remind teachers of what it's all about.

Some guidelines.....

In general, workshops can be more effective if:

-- they are designed to meet specific, felt needs of teachers

-- teachers are involved in their design and (if appropriate) their implementation

-- they are designed with a single (or at least a simple set of) purpose (s) in mind

-- the desired outcome (objective) is clearly specified in advance and made available to teachers at the outset for on-going checking

-- they involve a maximum degree of involvement by participants

-- methods to achieve objective are varied and appropriate

As workshops are conducted, outlines will be included in this handbook and circulated among sites.

Orientation Workshop for Teachers

COURSE OBJECTIVES Where do I want to go? (What do I want my students to know at the end of the course?)	METHODS How do I plan to get there? (What techniques will I use to facilitate items in the first column?)	EVALUATION How shall I know when I'm there? (What behaviors/ activities will show me that learning has occurred?)
1. To make the teachers feel good about what they're doing	1. Sit in a circle if possible and: a. Get to know each other b. Talk about their classes	1. Positive feedback during the reflection period at the end of the workshop
2. To familiarize teachers with workshop objectives	2. Hand out copies of this sheet. Discussion: Melding of a. Where are we now? b. Where do we want to go?	2. All teachers and TSS person are in agreement as to workshop objectives.
3. To convey certain information about VCC: a. Introduction to VCC b. Maintenance c. Forms d. Behavioral Objectives & Affective Objectives	3. a. Prior mailing & in class disc. b. " " " " " of the 5 maintenance visits c. In-class handouts & discussion of why forms are necessary d. Explanation, example, practice	3. a. Questions by teachers indicated this is understood b. same c. same d. Teachers will correctly write up simple set(s) of similar (for all) objectives Then they might start writing the objectives for their own courses.
4. To allow individual consultation with each teacher	4. Break and meet with each teacher to: a. Hand out course description forms b. Set up date & time for an individual meeting	4. TSS person will insure that all teachers have set up a date to meet with him individually.
5. To stimulate teachers and to give them teaching tools.	5. a. A discussion of what they <u>didn't</u> like about school b. A discussion of good teaching techniques	5. Teachers will indicate that they have enough ideas to at least start with.
6. To receive feedback on the effect of the workshop	6. Discussion of the workshop a. What did I learn today? b. Is there a gap between what I expected to learn and what I actually learned? c. Why did I fail to learn what I wanted to? d. How does it feel to be a student? e. How did others help? f. Did I learn any teaching techniques which might help in class? g. How would I have changed this workshop? h. How do I <u>feel</u> about what happened in this workshop? i. Would individual teachers like to have further meetings?	6. When the group seems to have productively evaluated the workshop